

District 25 News

MAKIKI, TANTALUS, MCCULLY, PAPAOLEA

October 2007



Dear Neighbors,

Living in an urban area has its ups and downs. All too often it can feel as though turning our backs on our constant crime and traffic woes is the only way to escape the drawbacks of city life.

Though many of us are resigned to living with these inconveniences, solutions are moving forward to address these problems. Read on for highlights of steps taken by the Legislature and State agencies to alleviate the problems and take the tension and stress out of life in urban Oahu, and learn

how you can assist with recycling, keeping our neighborhoods free from drug houses, and participating in the Lunalilo On-Ramp project.

Got Email? One of my goals is to communicate through this newsletter with as many constituents as possible. Unfortunately, due to high cost I am unable to mail newsletters to every resident in the District. One way to reduce cost is to email newsletters. If you would like to receive this newsletter by email, please email me at repbelatti@capitol.hawaii.gov.

As always, please contact me if you have questions or concerns. I can be reached by phone at 586-9425, by fax at 586-9431, or by email at repbelatti@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Mahalo,

DELLA AU BELATTI, State Representative

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Upcoming Holidays

Monday November 12th
Veteran's Day
Thursday Nov. 22nd
Thanksgiving Day

"4th ANNUAL COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP"

FUND RAISER for KAIMUKI HS, KAPAHULU & MOILIILI CTRS.

October 13, 2007 – 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Please save your recyclable waste for this date and help turn trash into cash to support Kaimuki High School, Kapahulu Center and Moiliili Community Ctr.

- scrap metal, pipes, metal appliances,
- green waste
- car parts, bicycles, lawn mowers refrigerators,
- tires (passenger tires only, limit - 1 load per household)
- useable clothing and household items
- cellular phones
- one computer per household/car
- car batteries
- newspaper, cardboard
- beverage containers
- confidential documents to shred
- cooking oil
- printer cartridges

Please call: Steve Uyeno at 527-5587 or Rene Mansho at 306-1876 for curbside pick-up / info.



Copper Theft

Fed up with thieves taking advantage of us all, this year the Legislature raised penalties for theft of a pound or more of copper to a class C felony. Last month, 45-year old Michael Scott Handy was the first to be caught and convicted under the new law, and was sentenced to the maximum 5 year prison term and fined \$4500 of the possible \$10,000 fine.

In addition to these new penalties, anyone selling copper to a scrap dealer will have to provide a receipt or notarized declaration about the copper's source, who sold the copper to them, when the copper was purchased, and other specific details about the transaction.

Scrap metal recyclers must also verify the copper seller's identity, photocopy the seller's ID, and take a photograph of both the seller and the copper. These records must be kept available for inspection by law enforcement for two years.

Scrap dealers who do not follow these regulations will be fined \$1000 for the first offense, \$3000 for the second, and \$5000 and a license suspension for the third. In some situations, licenses can be revoked.



Copper wiring stripped from public utilities is being recycled for cash in cities and states across the nation.

Graffiti

This year there have been 46 reported graffiti incidents in the Makiki area. In the same period last year there were 32. The graffiti problem in our area continues to grow, but by expanding the consequences and penalties for this sort of vandalism, we can make the punishment fit the crime, and deter those caught from ever picking up a spray can again.

To accomplish this, the Legislature recently mandated that courts must order a minor convicted of graffiti vandalism, or his parents, to remove the graffiti themselves or pay for the cost of having the damaged property repaired or replaced.

In addition, minors convicted of vandalism will be required to perform a minimum of 80 hours of additional community service by cleaning up other people's graffiti as a deterrent to themselves and other vandals in the future.

Drug Nuisance Abatement

Graffiti is not the only problem that has been on the rise in our area. This year there have been 27 reported drug-related incidents. At this time last year there were only 23. Neighbors are increasingly finding drug manufacturers and dealers living in their neighborhood. Fortunately, they can call the Drug Nuisance Abatement Unit to force the offenders out.

Created in 2003, the Drug Nuisance Abatement Unit is housed in the Office of the Attorney General. Its primary mission isn't just to prosecute drug dealers, but more importantly force them out of our communities. If investigators find drug dealers or manufacturers living in a neighborhood, they can file civil lawsuits barring the offenders from their own property in defense of the community, and seize the house.

If drug-related crimes are occurring in a rental house, investigators will ask the landlord to evict the offenders immediately, and if the owner does not comply, the State can seize their property.

To expand the resources and capabilities of the highly successful Drug Nuisance Abatement Unit, the Legislature appropriated an additional \$150,000 for new investigator positions and staff. Until now the program has been run by just a handful of investigators. This increase will help expand their capacity and speed up the process.

To report drug activity in your neighborhood, call the Drug Nuisance Abatement Hotline at 586-1328.

Animal Cruelty

Putting an end to the malicious abuse of pets and animals is a great concern for many pet owners in Makiki.

This year the penalties for most types of animal cruelty, such as intentionally or knowingly torturing, mutilating or poisoning an animal resulting in serious bodily injury or death, were raised to a class C felony. Those who are convicted of such abuse will now be subject to a 5 year prison term and \$10,000 fine.



Pet animals such as dogs, cats, domesticated rabbits, guinea pigs and most caged birds fall under these new protections.

Previously, the penalty for these types of animal cruelty was a misdemeanor, resulting in a one year prison term and \$2000 fine.



Bottle Bill Improvements



There has been a dramatic increase in the rate of recycling since the Legislature passed the "Bottle Bill" in 2004 that added a 5 cent fee to recycle cans and bottles. In 2005, it is estimated that the new law kept more than half a billion bottles and cans out of Hawaii's landfills.

However, the program was not perfect, and there were complaints about how the recycled bottles were counted to issue a refund, and that there was often difficulty finding open redemption centers.

Recognizing how effective the Bottle Bill is for encouraging recycling in Hawaii and keeping cans and bottles from littering our streets, the Legislature amended the recycling law to meet some of the concerns that the community had about the program.

Changes were made to streamline the redemption process and make it easier for residents to recycle their beverage containers. Although the Legislature wanted to make redemption mandatory at all supermarkets to be convenient for the average shopper as many other states do, opposition from supermarket retailers produced a compromise.

Redemption centers must now remain open 30 hours every week in most areas, and they must be open on week-ends. In addition, larger 2-liter bottles that previously were not part of the redemption program are now included.

As residents in our community find it easier to recycle their bottles and cans, we will be able to recycle more of them and reduce the trash entering landfills.



Save Hawaii's Clean Environment—and Save on Every Trip to the Grocery Store

Households in the United States use about 100 billion plastic bags, 99% of which aren't recycled. These bags that fill our landfills take between 20 and 1000 years to break down.



Store:	Rebate:
Foodland	5 cents
Sack'n Save	5 cents
Times	3 cents
Star	3 cents
Safeway	1-3 cents

Now, you can help reduce this waste and add money to your own wallet by bringing bags with you when picking up your groceries. Honolulu stores offer rebates at the cash register when you show up with your own bags. Most stores provide a flat rebate, but some like Safeway base it on the type of bag you bring. Find out more at:

www.honolulu.gov/mayor/21stcenturyahupuaa.htm

Lunalilo On-ramp Project Update

The Department of Transportation has continued to move forward with plans for design and construction changes to eliminate traffic congestion and vehicle weaving between the Lunalilo on-ramp and Vineyard off-ramp on the H1 freeway.

Because the project requires federal funding in addition to appropriations from the state, it had been placed on a list of pending projects awaiting the release of limited federal financing.

In a July meeting of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization(OMPO) that is responsible for this project as a part of Hawaii's "Transportation Improvement Plan," similar projects competing for federal funding on the neighbor islands were dropped off the priority list.

This has pushed the Lunalilo on-ramp project forward, and it will be receiving federal funding to be supplemented by the state sooner than anticipated, sometime next year.

As funding for this project grows closer and details of the planned changes become available, I have asked that they be shared with our community so we will know what to expect when work begins. Until then, I encourage you to weigh in on the matter at the next OMPO Citizen Advisory Committee meeting on October 17th. Call 587-2015 for meeting times and locations.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have as the Department of Transportation proceeds with its planned changes.

Free Screenings at COPD Education Day 2007



The COPD Foundation
along with the Hawaii COPD
Coalition presents

COPD Education Day
2 0 0 7

Learn more about emphysema,
chronic bronchitis and chronic
asthma at this
FREE Public Meeting

Friday, November 2, 2007
Queen's Medical Center - Conference
Center
510 S. Beretania Street - Honolulu
(corner of Punchbowl & South
Beretania)

There is nothing quite as refreshing as a breath of fresh air. For some, however, medical conditions prevent this small pleasure and can be the cause of severe breathing problems.

Associated with emphysema, chronic bronchitis and chronic asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a systemic condition caused by chronic airflow obstruction in the lungs.

Next month is COPD Awareness Month. On Friday, November 2nd, the Hawaii COPD Coalition will be hosting COPD Education Day. There will be free screenings, interactive workshops, informational exhibits and distinguished guest speakers.

If you think you might have a breathing problem, physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and pharmacists will be on hand to point you in the right direction.

Due to limited seating, advance registration is highly recommended. To register for this event, or for more information, please call Rien Vidad of the American Lung Association of Hawaii at 537-5966. Or, you can send an email to: copd.hawaii@yahoo.com.

Speakers

James Kiley, PhD, Keynote Speaker

Director of Lung Division
National Heart Lung Blood Institute
Bethesda, Maryland

Thomas W. Pollard, DO, Program Chair

Pulmonologist and Critical Care Specialist
Kapiolani Health Center at Pali Momi
Queens Medical Center

Patient Panel

Patients living actively with COPD

Della Au Belatti, JD

Moderator
Hawaii State Representative, 25th District